



MFC News

Caring for the Trees and Forests of Mississippi Since 1926

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May 2014



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The Mississippi Forestry Commission provides equal employment opportunities and services to all individuals regardless of disability, race, age, religion, color, gender, national origin, or political affiliation.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider

Picture Credits: Front Page - A funnel cloud is seen crossing the town of Louisville, Mississippi, on April 28, 2014. (Reuters/Gene Blevins)

Ten Deadliest U. S. Tornadoes On Record

The 10 deadliest tornadoes to touch down in the United States according to NOAA.

1. The "Tri-State Tornado" killed 695 people and injured 2,027, traveling more than 300 miles through Missouri, Illinois and Indiana on March 18, 1925. It was rated an F5 at the top of the old Fujita scale (with winds of 260-plus mph).

Continued on page 10

Newsletter Deadlines

All submissions are welcome. E-mail articles and photos to lharris@mfc.state.ms.us.

Tornadoes In Mississippi, Alabama Flatten Homes As Massive Storm Sweeps South. By AP Adrian Sainz and Jeff Amy.

LOUISVILLE, Miss. (AP) — Ruth Bennett died clutching the last child left at her day care center as a tornado wiped the building off its foundation. A firefighter who came upon the body gently pulled the toddler from her arms.

"It makes you just take a breath now," said next-door neighbor Kenneth Billingsley, who witnessed the scene at what was left of Ruth's Child Care Center in this logging town of 6,600. "It makes you pay attention to life."

Bennett, 53, was among at least 35 people killed in a two-day outbreak of twisters and other violent weather that pulverized homes from the Midwest to the Deep South. The child, whose name was not released, was alive when she was pulled from Bennett's arms and was taken to a hospital. Her condition was not known.

As crews in Mississippi and Alabama turned from search-and-rescue efforts to cleanup, forecasters began to downplay their

initially dire predictions of a third round of deadly twisters Tuesday. Meteorologists said the storm system had weakened substantially by evening, although some tornado watches and warnings were still in effect for isolated areas.

In North Carolina, the National Weather Service reported tornado touchdowns in five counties Tuesday, but the twisters caused only moderate structural damage to homes and toppled some trees. Two cities in the state reported extensive flooding from the storm system. No injuries were reported.

One of the hardest-hit areas in Monday evening's barrage of twisters was Tupelo, Miss., where a gas station looked as if it had been stepped on by a giant.

Francis Gonzalez, who also owns a convenience store and Mexican restaurant attached to the service station, took cover with her three children and two employees in the store's cooler as the roof over the gas pumps was reduced to aluminum shards.

"My Lord, how can all this

happen in just one second?" she said in Spanish.

On Tuesday, the growl of chain saws cut through the otherwise still, hazy morning in Tupelo. Massive oak trees, knocked over like toys, blocked roads. Neighbors helped one another cut away limbs.

"This does not even look like a place that I'm familiar with right now," said Pam Montgomery, walking her dog in her neighborhood. "You look down some of the streets, and it doesn't even look like there is a street."

By the government's preliminary count, 11 tornadoes — including one that killed 15 people in Arkansas — struck the nation's midsection on Sunday, and at least 25 ravaged the South on Monday, the National Weather Service Storm Prediction Center said.

Among those killed was 21-year-old University of Alabama swimmer and dean's list student John Servati, who was taking shelter in the basement of a Tuscaloosa home when a retaining wall collapsed on him.

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

His death — and that of at least two others in Alabama — came the day after the third anniversary of an outbreak of more than 60 tornadoes that killed more than 250 people across the state.

In Kimberly, Ala., north of Birmingham, the firehouse was among the buildings heavily damaged.

Four firefighters suffered little more than cuts and scrapes, but the bays over the fire trucks were destroyed, and the vehicles were covered with red bricks, concrete blocks and pieces of the roof.

The trucks were essentially trapped, so the town had to rely on nearby communities for emergency help.

Louisville was also one of the hardest-hit areas, with officials reporting at least nine dead in and around town because of a powerful tornado with a preliminary rating of EF4, just shy of the top of the scale.

A team formed by the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks was searching on Tuesday for an 8-year-old boy still missing from the community after rescuers

found the bodies of his parents near their destroyed home. The boy was believed to have been with his parents when the tornado struck, said department Capt. James Crawford.

Sennaphie Yates arrived at the small local hospital in Louisville to check on her grandfather just ahead of Monday's twister. As the funnel cloud closed in, staff members herded people into a hall.

"They had all of us against the wall and gave us pillows. They said, 'Get down and ... don't get up,'" she said.

The winds knocked down two walls and tore holes in the roof. Doctors moved some emergency room patients to a former operating room and sent some to other hospitals.

Bennett's day care center was not far from the hospital. Her niece Tanisha Lockett had worked at Ruth's Child Care since it opened seven years ago.

She said all but the one child — a 4-year-old girl who had been in the center's care since she was a baby — had been picked up before the storm.

On Tuesday, Bennett's family and those who

worked for her stepped over schoolbooks, first aid supplies and a Hooked on Phonics cassette as they tried to salvage paperwork.

"We're just trying to keep a smile on our faces," said Jackie Ivy, an employee. "I cried all last night."

Sainz reported from Tupelo, Miss. Associated Press writers Jack Elliott Jr. in Jackson, Miss., and Jay Reeves in Kimberly, Ala., contributed to this story.

April 2014 Facts:

According to the National Weather Service preliminary report, 58 tornadoes were tallied on Monday, April 28, 2014.

A large tornado, three-fourths of a mile wide, was reported near Louisville, MS, shortly after 4:30 p.m. CT. The Weather Channel reported winds of 150 mph above ground with that funnel cloud. According to the Associated Press, 45 people were injured in storms that passed through Louisville, and no deaths have been reported.

Mays Birthdays



Stanley Burks -1
John Morelan -1
Clayton Thames -1
Melody Amis -2
Larry Stephens -2
Christen Simmons -3
James Black -6
Christopher Shaw -7
John Ware -7
Edward Williams -7
John Giachelli -8
Brian James -8
Jerry Snellings -8
Keith Wooten -10
Charlie Morgan -14
Patrick Parker -14
Michael Burks -15
Ellis Warren -19
Donald Scarborough -20
Berry Thomas -22
Lyndol Giles -25
Charlie Howell -25
James Phillips -25
David Magee -26
James McCoy -26
Coburn Yelverton -26
Gregory Dixon -28
Shaun Rogers -30
Clifton Sewell -30
Mickey Chisolm -31
Kyle Cumbest -31



Say Hello To Our



- ♣ Samantha Blanchard, Forest Ranger, Stone County, Southeast District
- ♣ Heather Berry, Administrative Assistant, Stone County, Southeast District Office
- ♣ Christopher Shaw, Forestry Technician, Yalobusha County, Northwest District

SAYING



TO OUR FRIENDS

- ♣ Brent Bretherick, Emergency Telecommunicator, Stone County, Southeast District
- ♣ Jamie Denson, Forest Ranger, Hancock County, Southeast District
- ♣ Robert Gill, Jr., Forestry Technician, Leake County, East Central District.

May 2014



Leaves:

Type: simple, alternate, tardily deciduous
Size: 2.0" - 4.0" long; 0.5" - 1.0" wide
Margin: mostly entire
Apex: acute, or blunt (usually no bristle tip)
Base: cuneate
Shape: broadly elliptical or diamond-shaped (shape varies even on the same tree)
Color: dark green above; pale green below
Surface: shiny above; smooth with yellow midrib on both surfaces
Venation: pinnate

Twigs:

Size: slender
Color: reddish brown; grayish with age
Surface: smooth; leaf scars half-round; bundle scars numerous.

Buds:

Size: 0.06" - 0.13" long
Shape: ovoid, pointed
Color: chestnut brown
Surface: shiny scales

Fruit and Flowers:

Nut: acorn; biennial; cup saucer-shaped with pubescence on scales and inner surface, covers 25% of nut
Size: 0.63" long
Shape: nut nearly round
Color: brown

Tree Knowledge - Who Am I?

Flower: monoecious; unisexual; staminate, hairy, red-stemmed, yellow, catkins, 2.0" - 3.0" long; pistillate commonly solitary, on glabrous, stout, short, stalks

Bark: gray-black and furrowed; often showing white ridges on smaller stems

Physical Attributes:

Form: single stem
Size: 70.0', mature
Growth Rate: rapid; 28.0' maximum @ 20 yrs
Life Span: short (<50 yrs)

Tolerances:

Shade: tolerant
Drought: low
Fire: medium
Anaerobic: medium

Propagation:

Seed (cold stratification not required); bare root; container

Other: re sprout/coppice potential

Habitat and Ecology:

Site: floodplain forests, river and stream banks, swamp margins of the Coastal Plain; occasionally stream bottoms in the Piedmont
Soil Texture: medium - coarse
Soil pH: 4.2 - 6.0
Range: Texas; east to Florida; north to Virginia;

in Mississippi, mostly from the central counties south to the Gulf Coast

Wildlife Value and Uses:

consistent and abundant acorn crops are an important food source for many animals, including white-tailed deer, raccoon, squirrel, wild turkey, ducks, quail, smaller birds, and rodents; acorns of the black oak group do not germinate until spring, unlike those of the white oak group, and are an important winter food source; palatable for browse animals

Timber Value and Uses:

hard, heavy, and strong wood, but does not produce good quality lumber; marketed for pulpwood, and also used for crossties and firewood

Landscaping Info: noted for its dense, oval canopy; used as an ornamental and shade tree in the South; good for reclamation, parking lot islands, and highway medians, prone to epicormic branching

Other Facts: A ??? was planted at the White House in Washington, D.C. by President Lyndon B. Johnson.

Who Am I?

Odds & Ends Forestry News

Cornell Study Shows School Gardens Boost Youth Activity Levels

Ithaca, NY - A two-year Cornell study of 12 elementary schools in five New York regions finds that kids at schools with gardens increased their activity levels. Students at schools with gardens were moderately physically active at school for 10 more minutes a week

than before their schools had gardens--an increase of four times what peers experienced at garden-less schools. [More](#)

[40 American soldiers planted more than 2,000 trees on Korea's Arbor Day.](#)

Wood is good, and here's more science to prove it.

Yale University-led study has found that using more wood and less steel and concrete in building and bridge construction would substantially reduce global carbon dioxide emissions and fossil fuel consumption. [More](#)

Louisville Tornado: Facts

🌳 The tornado that struck the Louisville, Miss., area was given a preliminary rating of at least EF4 by the National Weather Service. EF4 tornadoes have winds of 166-200 mph, making the Louisville twister the most powerful



Timber damage in Louisville, MS.

Tree Knowledge - Who Am I?

April 2014 was the Eastern Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana* L.) Check out page 11 in the Mississippi Trees book.



Leaf



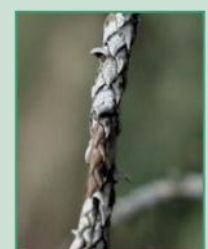
Fruit



Bark



Tree



Twig

Updated Storm Damage Reported To MEMA

As of April 29, 2014.

PEARL – The Mississippi Emergency Management Agency has received reports of at 12 deaths and widespread damages related to the severe weather and tornadoes that moved through the state Monday.

The counties reporting storm-related deaths are as follows:

- **Issaquena:** One death.
- **Lee:** One death.
- **Rankin:** One death.
- **Winston:** Nine deaths.

National Weather Service survey crews have confirmed tornadoes touched down in at least three counties. Crews have rated the tornado in Tupelo as an EF-2 with winds between 111 to 135 mph. Due to some areas being inaccessible survey teams will look at additional damages to determine if the tornado may have been stronger. In Winston County NWS surveyors determined damages are the result of an EF-4 tornado with winds estimated between 166 to 200 mph. In Rankin County NWS survey teams have determined an EF-3 tornado with winds between 136-165 mph touched down Monday evening.

The primary focus of emergency crews is search and rescue in the affected areas. MEMA area coordinators have been dispatched to Itawamba, Lee and Winston counties to assist with operations.

The counties reporting damages are as follows:

- **Choctaw-:** Several roads affected by flash flooding.
- **Desoto:** Several roads affected by flash flooding.
- **Grenada:** Eight homes minor damage.
- **Hinds:** Several homes damaged, trees and power lines down, roads affected by flash flooding.
- **Itawamba:** Several Homes damaged and roads affected by debris and flash flooding.
- **Jones:** Homes damaged and roads affected by flash flooding.
- **Leake:** Several homes damaged.
- **Lee:** Major damage in the City of Tupelo. Reports of extensive home damage in the area.
- **Lowndes:** 35 homes with major damage. 55 homes with minor damage and one business was destroyed.
- **Madison:** Several roads closed due to damage.
- **Montgomery:** Two homes destroyed, one with major damage and eight homes with minor damage.
- **Neshoba:** Several roads closed due to debris and flooding.
- **Newton:** Four homes destroyed and four homes with major damage. Eight homes suffered minor damage and four homes were affected. Five roads received major damage and another six had minor damage.
- **Quitman:** Trees and power

lines down in the Marks community.

- **Rankin:** One death in Richland. Highland Park Trailer Park: 37 mobile homes destroyed, 12 with major damage, 11 with minor damage and 59 affected. Numerous injuries reported from this location. Additional damage surveys are underway in other parts of the county.
- **Scott:** One home destroyed and one home with minor damage. One business received minor damage and three people were injured. One person remains hospitalized.
- **Simpson:** Two homes were destroyed, five homes with major damage and 15 homes with minor damage.
- **Warren:** Four homes with major damage and three homes sustained minor damage.
- **Wayne:** Several homes affected and roads closed due to flooding.
- **Winston:** Seven deaths and numerous injuries. Major damage near Louisville. The Winston Medical Center has been damaged. Several homes have been destroyed.

Three shelters are open in Lee and Winston counties:

- **Columbus-** Southside Baptist Church 100 Nashville Ferry Rd. East
- **Louisville-** First Methodist Church, 300 W. Main St.

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- **Louisville**- First Baptist Church, 305 S. Church Ave.
- **Pearl**- Pearl Community Center next to City Hall 2420 Old Brandon Rd.
- **Tupelo**- BancorpSouth Building, 375 E. Main St.

Gov. Phil Bryant has declared a State of Emergency Monday to make state resources available to assist affected areas.

As of 4 p.m. approximately 27,350 customers are without power in the state.

The Mississippi National Guard is assisting with response efforts in Lee and Winston counties. The Mississippi Highway Patrol has also dispatched teams to affected areas.

Volunteers interested in assisting affected communities may sign up at <http://volunteermisissippipi.org/2014/04/2014-tornado-relief/>.

Residents are urged not to self-deploy but to sign up and assist with the coordinated volunteer relief effort.

Much of the state is still under a tornado watch with the possibility of tornadoes, severe thunderstorms, damaging winds, heavy rain and flooding and dangerous lightning. Residents should monitor local media, social media or other technology for current weather conditions and notifications.

April 28, 2014 Tornado Event - National Weather Service

Event Summary as of 5/1/2014

A powerful spring storm system brought a multi-day severe weather outbreak across a large portion of the country during the April 27-30 timeframe. This outbreak started across the Central Plains on the 27th and slowly migrated eastward over the following two days. A large tornado outbreak occurred across the Lower MS River & TN River Valleys on the 28th. The event was capped on the 30th with additional severe weather and a historic flash flooding/heavy rain event along the AL, FL gulf coast where rainfall totals peaked between 15-25 inches!

Across the NWS Jackson, MS forecast area, the tornado outbreak on the 28th was the main event. This event was driven by a classic severe weather pattern with a strong fast moving jet stream and a deep surface cyclone over the central plains. These features helped to produce strong wind shear in the atmosphere which in turn combined with rich gulf moisture and setup a vola-

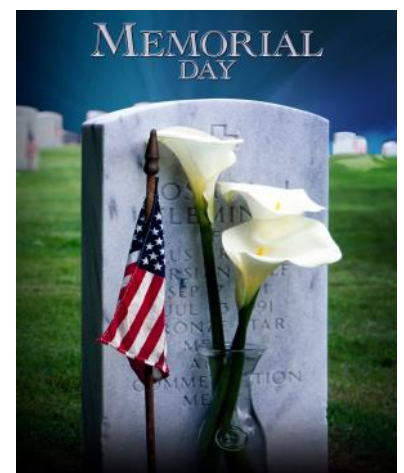
tile atmospheric mix. Multiple super-cell thunderstorms developed during the afternoon/evening and produced many instances of damaging wind and large hail along with multiple tornadoes. The most devastating tornado was the EF-4 which tore a path across NE Leake, the corners of Attala/Neshoba counties, and through the heart of Winston County where the city of Louisville was especially hard hit. Other hard hit counties were Lowndes, Rankin, Hinds, Scott, Newton, Montgomery and Jones. Each of these counties experienced at least one tornado, some multiple tornadoes. Of these tornadoes, 1 was rated EF-4, two were EF-3, three EF-2 and others EF1 with more tornadoes to be surveyed. As of this writing, 14 tornadoes have been confirmed along with 10 fatalities reported with an un-tallied number of injuries. Information will be updated as surveys are completed and official reports from individual counties are issued. Below is a table that has more specific information on each tornado.

Additional surveys are still planned for the following areas....

- Lauderdale County
- Sandersville area of Jones County
- Near Kilmichael in Montgomery County
- Near Standing Pine and Madden in Leake County.

See page 10 , 11 and 12 for more information from National Weather Service.

Memorial Day 2014 is on May 26th.



Tupelo Tornado: Facts

- ✦ In Tupelo, Miss., dozens of buildings were damaged and 30 people sought treatment at Northeast Mississippi Medical Center. Four people were admitted.
- ✦ Winds were reported up to 170 mph, with the Tupelo tornado estimated to be 1 mile wide. It was first spotted by storm chasers at 2:43 p.m. local time. According to the Weather Channel, "around 2:50 the tornado reportedly crossed through the intersection of US-45 and US-78 through the northern limits of Tupelo." WTVA TV was forced to evacuate mid-broadcast as the tornado approached, resulting in the harrowing video seen above.
- ✦ Debris Was Flying 35, 000 feet into the air. Devastating Damage. Don Lewis, the city's chief operations officer, tells the Clarion Ledger that there is damage to houses and cars in the northern part of the city. Several tractor-trailers were blown off the highway, reports the Memphis NBC affiliate. Dramatic images are flooding social media, including these jaw-dropping before-and-after shots. See below and next page.
- ✦ Tupelo was hit by one of the Worst Tornadoes in History. In 1936, Tupelo was struck by a tornado that is known as [one of the worst in American history](#). It killed 216 people and injured some 700. Elvis Presley, then a baby, was among the survivors.



Before and After: Tornado damage at Shell Station in Tupelo.



Above: A lone resident surveys the damage following a Tornado that destroyed much the city in Tupelo, Mississippi, on April 28, 2014. (Reuters/Thomas Wells)

Left: Before and After: Tornado damage at Family Clinic in Tupelo.



A funnel cloud, viewed from the Barnes Crossing area of Tupelo, Mississippi, as it tore across town on April 28, 2014. (Reuters/Thomas Wells)

Mississippi Survey Information

(*** Tornado survey incomplete, data preliminary)

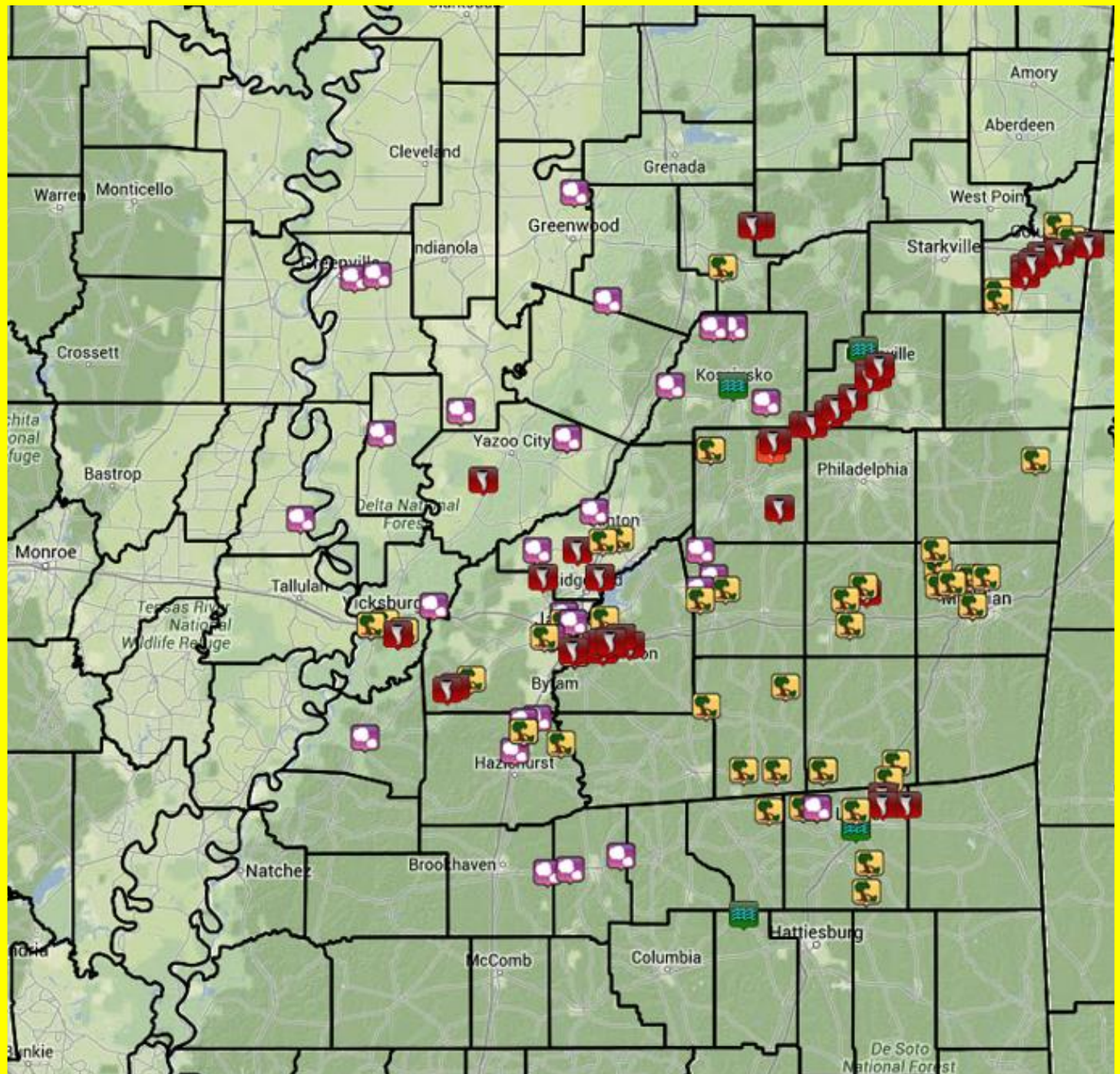
Location	Start/ End Time	Event Type	Fatalities/ Injuries	Path Length	Path Width
Leake, Neshoba, Attala, and Winston counties 2 NE Renfroe to 5 NNE Louisville	3:51 pm - 4:47 pm	EF-4 Tornado 185 mph	Deaths: 9 Injuries: N/A	34.3 miles	3/4 mile
Warren County 4.5 S Vicksburg to 5.25 SE Vicksburg	4:55 pm - 5:05 pm	EF-1 Tornado 105 mph	none	4.75 mi	200 yards
Hinds County 1.5 N Edwards to 6.25 NNW Clinton	5:20 pm - 5:42 pm	EF-1 Tornado 110 mph	none	13.75 mi	500 yards
Lowndes County*** Crawford	5:42 pm - 5:44 pm	EF-1 Tornado 90 mph	none	0.7 mi	N/A yards
Hinds County 2 NW Utica to 4 NNW Dry Grove	5:48 pm - 6:05 pm	EF-1 Tornado 105 mph	none	10.9 mi	300 yards
Lowndes County*** Crawford 6 NNE to Columbus 2 SSW	5:53 pm - 6:15 pm	EF-2 Tornado 130 mph	none	10.4 mi	N/A yards
Madison County 6 NW Madison to 6 NNW Madison	6:00 pm - 6:06 pm	EF-1 Tornado 105 mph	none	3.75 mi	200 yards
Hinds, Rankin, and Scott counties 3 W Richland to 4.5 E Pelahatchie	6:27 pm - 7:15 pm	EF-3 Tornado 155 mph	Deaths: 1 Injuries: at least 10	30.1 mi	400 yards
Lowndes County*** Columbus 4 ENE to Steens 2 SSE	6:15 pm - 6:19 pm	EF-1 Tornado 105 mph	N/A	2.6 mi	NA
Lowndes County*** Columbus 4 SSE to New Hope 4 NE (continues into AL)	6:40 pm - 6:54 pm	EF-2 Tornado 115 mph	N/A	7.4 mi (in MS)	NA
Scott County 2 E Forest to 3.5 WNW Lake	7:38 pm - 7:46 pm	EF-3 Tornado 140 mph	Deaths: 0 Injuries: 3	4.2 mi	150 yards
Newton County 4 NE Lake to 2 SW Decatur	7:58 pm - 8:12 pm	EF-1 Tornado 110 mph	none	9.75 mi	150 yards
Newton County 1 SE Decatur to 5 E Decatur	8:12 pm - 8:31 pm	EF-2 Tornado 125 mph	none	6.2 mi	400 yards
Newton and Lauderdale counties*** E Newton Co into W Lauderdale Co	N/A pm - N/A	Tornado N/A mph	N/A	NA	NA

Ten Deadliest U. S. Tornadoes On Record

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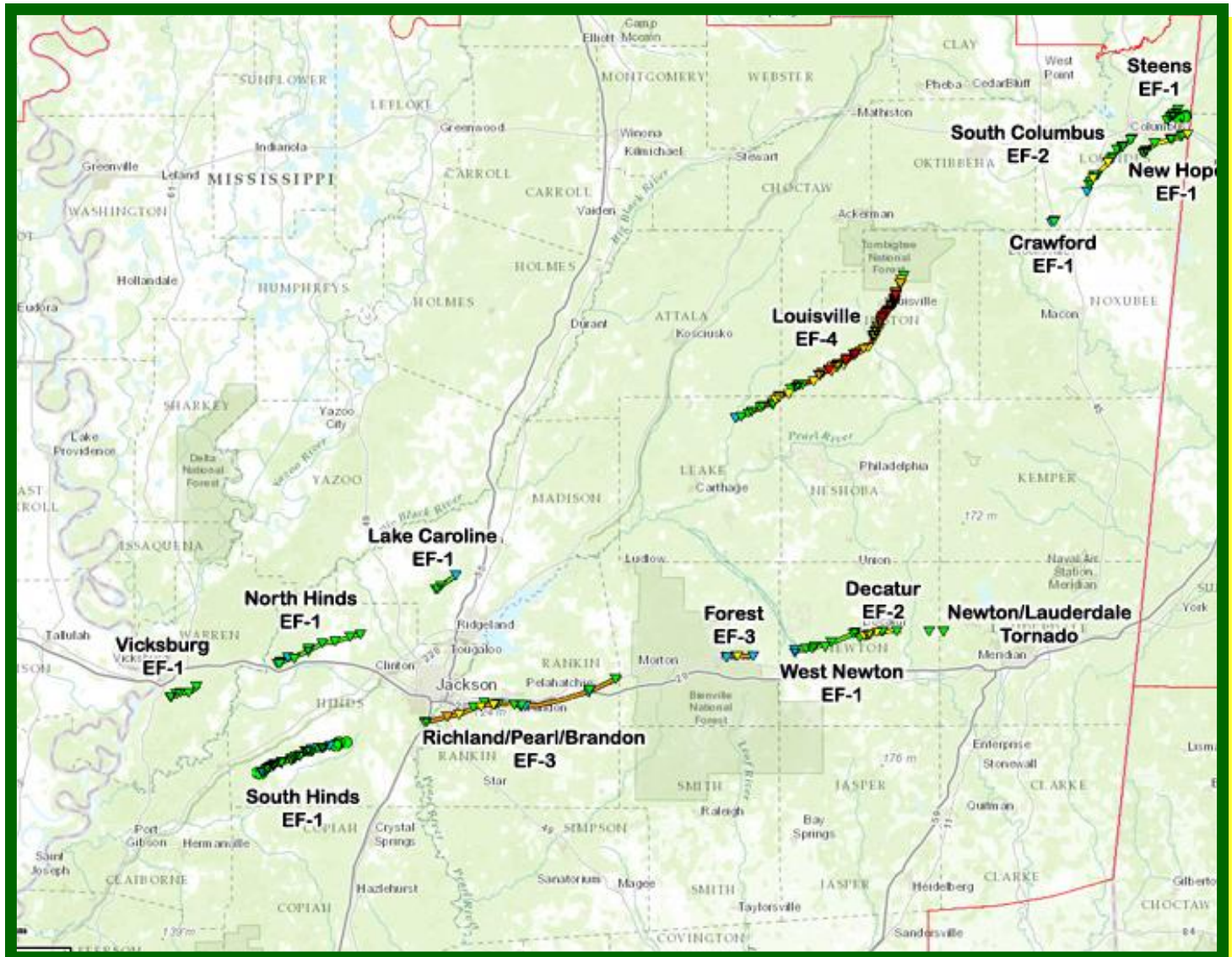
- The "Natchez Tornado" killed 317 people and injured 109 on May 6, 1840, along the Mississippi River in Louisiana and Mississippi. The official death toll may not have included slaves, according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency.
- The "St. Louis Tornado" killed 255 people and injured 1,000 on May 27, 1896, in Missouri and Illinois. It had winds of between 207 mph and 260 mph.
- The "Tupelo Tornado" killed 216 people and injured 700 on April 5, 1936, in the northeastern Mississippi city.
- The "Gainesville Tornado" was a pair of storms that converged April 6, 1936, in Gainesville, Georgia, killing 203 people and injuring 1,600. The tornado destroyed four blocks and 750 houses in the northern Georgia town.

Mississippi Local Storm Reports



- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| T-storm Wind Damage | Hail | Tornado |
| T-storm Wind Gust | Flood/Flash Flood | Heavy Rain |
| Microburst/Downburst | Funnel Cloud | Lightning Damage |

Mississippi Tornado Tracks



Ten Deadliest U. S. Tornadoes On Record

6. The "Woodward Tornado" wreaked havoc across parts of Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas on April 9, 1947. The storm, which killed 181 people and injured 970, reportedly was more than a mile wide in places
7. The tornado that struck Joplin, Missouri, on May 22, 2011, killed 158 people and injured more than a thousand. The storm packed winds in excess of 200 mph and was on the ground for more than 22 miles.
8. The "Amite/Pine/Purvis Tornado" killed 143 people and injured 770 on April 24, 1908. The storm left only seven houses intact in Purvis, Mississippi, and also caused damage in Amite, Louisiana.
9. The "New Richmond Tornado" killed 117 people and injured 200 on June 12, 1899, in New Richmond, Wisconsin.
10. The "Flint Tornado" killed 115 people and injured 844 on June 8, 1953, in Flint, Michigan. The tornado was the deadliest twister ever recorded in the state.

2014 Teachers Conservation Workshops

MFA is now accepting registrations for the 2014 Teachers Conservation Workshops set for Jones County Junior College, June 8 - 13, and Northeast Mississippi Community College, June 22 - 27. This year will be the 51st year for these MFA-sponsored workshops. During the week educators are exposed to classroom instruction and activities, new educational materials, and numerous field trips including industries, harvesting operations, management practices, and nature trails. Participants learn by demonstration and practical exercises how relevant conservation practices can be integrated into classroom work and student projects. Participants also become certified in Project Learning Tree.

Please return [registration form](#) and fee to MFA, 620 N. State Street, Suite 201, Jackson, MS 39202. Questions? Email epo-pe@msforestry.net.



Let's welcome Wyatt Williams born on March 26, 2014. He is the grandson of Pamela Pace, Administrative Assistant at the Northeast District Office. Wyatt weighed in at 6 lbs, 12 oz.



Mississippi Firewise Workshops

Firewise workshops are **FREE** events, however, **pre-registration is required**. Meals, refreshments and workshop materials will be provided. Firewise workshop and/or field days are a one-day event, bringing together citizens, business, and community leaders involved in planning, financing, building, sustaining, and protecting communities in the wildland/urban interface. This will be a learning experience and participants will learn about why homes burn, various wildland fuel reduction techniques, and how to assess the fire danger of their own home.

Hancock County - The Mississippi Forestry Commission, Hancock County Soil & Water Conservation District are sponsoring a How To Have A Firewise Home event on **May 15, 2014** at the Hancock County Soil & Water Conservation Office in Kiln, MS. Pre-registration is needed by May 1, 2014 to get a head count for the meal. Please call (228) 255-3255 or (228) 395-1503 or stop by the Hancock County Soil & Water Conservation District Office at 18335 Highway 603N, Kiln, Mississippi for more information. [Click here](#) for a Introduction Letter, Agenda and Pre- registration form.

The above Firewise events are approximately half a day in length and covers the basics principles of Firewise in Mississippi. The following CFE/CEU/CLE are given for these events: Registered Forester, 2 hrs of category II; Certified Loggers, 2 hrs of category II; Realtors, 3 hrs Elective Real Estate Course, Approval Code 10181; Structural Firefighter, Certificate of Attendance, 2 hrs; credit is not available for Teachers and Professional Disciplines.

For more information on Firewise in Mississippi, contact Opie Blackwell at lblackwell@mfc.state.ms.us.

Safety First . . .

Safety Is In Your Hands - Tornado Safety

Tornadoes are one of the greatest weather risks facing Mississippi. They spawn from powerful thunderstorms and can cause deaths and devastate neighborhoods in seconds. A tornado appears as a rotating, funnel-shaped cloud that extends from a thunderstorm to the ground with whirling winds that can reach 300 miles per hour. Damage paths can be in excess of one mile wide and 50 miles long. National Weather Service Statistics show Mississippi averages 26 tornadoes and 7 deaths per year since 1950. In 2005 the state had a record 99 tornadoes.

The following are some tips to help you prepare your home and family for a tornado:

What to do if you are in your home during a Tornado:

- Go to the lowest level of the home, an inner hallway, or smaller inner room without windows, such as a closet or bathroom.
- Get away from windows and go to the center of the room. Avoid corners, because they tend to attract debris.
- Get under a sturdy piece of furniture, such as a workbench or heavy table.

If you are in a mobile home:

Evacuate the mobile home, even if it is equipped with tie-downs. Take

shelter in a building with a strong foundation, or if one is not available, lie in a ditch or low-lying area a safe distance away from the mobile home. Tornadoes cannot change elevation quickly enough to pick someone up out of a ditch, especially a deep ditch or culvert.

If you are at work or school:

- Go to the basement or to an inside hallway at the lowest level of the building.
- Avoid places with wide-span roofs, such as auditoriums, cafeterias, large hallways or shopping malls.
- Use your arms to protect your head and neck.

If outdoors:

- If possible, get inside a sturdy building with a concrete foundation.
- If shelter is not available, or there is no time to get indoors, lie in a ditch or low-lying area or crouch near a strong building.
- Be aware of the potential for flooding.

If you are in a vehicle:

- Never try to out drive a tornado in your vehicle. Tornadoes can change direction very quickly and can lift a vehicle and toss it in the air
- Get out of the vehicle and take shelter in a nearby building.
- If there is no time to get in-

doors, get out of the vehicle and lie in a ditch or low-lying area away from the vehicle.

To prepare for extreme heat:

- Install window air conditioners snugly; insulate if necessary.
- Check air-conditioning ducts for proper insulation.
- Install temporary window reflectors (for use between windows and drapes), such as aluminum foil-covered cardboard, to reflect heat back outside.
- Weather-strip doors and sills to keep cool air in.
- Cover windows that receive morning or afternoon sun with drapes, shades, awnings or louvers.
- Keep storm windows up all year.

To download our Tornado Activity Sheet, [click here](#).

Find out how to build your own safe room: [click here](#).



First Time, Every Time